



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

1901-01-01

Letter from [John Muir] to James Hay, [1901].

John Muir

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[1901]

My dear Cousin James Hay:

I thank you [for] your long kind letter full of news. The death of your brother Hardie, so widely beloved and respected, we all were prepared for, as Mrs. Lunam with fond love watched over him [and] sent me full news of his advancing feebleness. When a good man dies in fullness of years even in the midst of natural grief, however heavy, there is always the feeling that all the burden of years is at length laid down, that he is at rest, and one hears "well done good and faithful servant." Heaven and earth are seen close together, and the influence of his life goes on forever.

How short these later years appear. It seems but yesterday since we were all boys, and again when we trace back the chain of events of which life is made up it seems immeasurably long. Often in the mountains the great wild days seemed neither long nor short, without definite beginning or ending. We are all wearin' awa' and as late afternoon comes on the years seem to fly fast and it behooves us to work hard and do our task while the light lasts.

I'm glad to hear the young folk are getting on so well. The success as far as pecuniary affairs are concerned is always a slow, ticklish, uncertain thing with artists, especially in landscape, so few are able to buy good paintings, and of those who are few indeed have the sure taste to know a good picture when they see it.

[John Muir]